

Tampico, in river debris, abundant.

This tiny snail seems to be at least subgenerically distinct from *Cæcilianella* (*Cecilioides*) by the very obtuse summit and short wide spire. It is closely related to *A. consobrina* Orb.

IN RE CYTHEREA PETECHIALIS OF CARPENTER'S MAZATLAN
CATALOGUE.

BY ROBERT E. C. STEARNS.

In Dr. Dall's "Synopsis of the Family Veneridæ,"¹ etc., he remarks "*Cytherea petechialis* Lamarck, 1818, is listed by Carpenter from Mazatlan having been found among the Reigen shells, but it is certainly exotic, none having appeared from there for half a century."

It is not unlikely that the shell collected by Reigen was an example of the exceedingly rare and handsome variety of *Macrocallista* (*Chionella*) *squalida*, the color markings of which are suggestive of the Asiatic *petechialis*. In my paper on "The Shells of the Tres Marias,"² etc., etc., under *Cytherea* (*Callista*) *chionæa* I refer to the matter. I have never seen more than half a dozen examples of the variety. The National Museum contains if I am not mistaken two or more specimens.

I am quite familiar with *squalida* as well as *petechialis* having had a great many of both species, and for many years distributed both freely in the course of exchanges. The West Coast species is common in Scammon's Lagoon with *Macron Ethiops* Reeve (= *M. Kelletii* Hinds) and elsewhere on both sides of the peninsula and in the Gulf of California.

THE U. S. COAST SURVEY EXPEDITION TO ALASKA IN THE YEAR 1867.

BY ROBERT E. C. STEARNS.

If not a stroke of genius, it was a timely inspiration that caused Dr. C. Hart Merriam to expand what might have been hardly more than a notable pleasure excursion into an important scientific expedition. Probably never before were so many eminent scientific men brought together, and under such agreeable circumstances, as formed

¹ Proc. U. S. Nat. Museum, p. 408, vol. xxvi, 1902.

² Proc. U. S. Nat. Museum, p. 153, vol. xvii, 1894.

the party that went north on the steamer *G. W. Elder*, constituting the Harriman Alaska Expedition.

It was also a happy thought that led Dr. Dall to utilize the opportunity for publication in the Harriman Expedition Series, of his volume on the "Land and Fresh-Water Mollusks," which has been appropriately reviewed by Dr. Pilsbry.¹ It will doubtless be a standard reference book for the next quarter of a century.

The number of species collected by the expedition is nowhere stated. With a copy of Dr. Dall's volume before me, memory recalls what was an important event in its time, forty years ago, the U. S. Coast Survey Expedition to Alaska,² in charge of Professor George Davidson, which left San Francisco, July 21, 1867, and returning, arrived in San Francisco on the following 18th of November.

In this, the first expedition under the flag in connection with the acquisition of Alaska, or perhaps more accurately, Russian America, provision was made for biological investigation, hence my special interest in it, and further, for the reason that two members of the biological staff were kindly appointed by Professor Davidson on my suggestion. Mr. W. G. W. Harford was the conchologist and general collector. The season proved unfavorable, the weather being bad, and the collection of mollusks, therefore, in number of species, was small. Of the marine forms 69 species were taken; the *Buccinidæ* were determined by Dr. William Stimpson, the rest by the writer. The few land shells as named below, were identified by Dr. J. G. Cooper.

Helix columbiana Lea, Sitka; Chilcot River, 59° 9' N.

Helix vancouverensis Lea, Sitka; Vancouver Island.

Helix rudrata Stud., Ounalaska.

Helix fulva Drap., Sitka; Ounalaska.

Vitrina pellucida Müll. (?).

Zua lubrica Müll., Sitka; Kodiak.

The list as it appeared in the Coast Survey volume, contained many typographical errors; it was subsequently revised and published by me.³

¹ The NAUTILUS, Vol. XIX, December, 1905.

² Report of the Supt. U. S. Coast Survey, during the year 1867. Appendix No. 18, pp. 187-329. Washington, D. C., 1869.

³ Shells collected by the U. S. Coast Survey Expedition to Alaska in the year 1867. Proc. Cal. Acad. Nat. Sciences, Dec. 2, 1867.

This and the other paper¹ mentioned in the foot-note, which contained a few pages on the circumboreal distribution of molluscan species, were omitted from the bibliography of Dr. Dall's volume.

A FEW NOTES ON SAY'S EARLY WRITINGS AND SPECIES.

BY V. STERKI.

Again and again, these last years, I have looked over a copy of T. Say's "Conchology" in the "British Encyclopedia" (Nicholson's),² and found a few things which caught my attention particularly and appear worth mentioning and discussing if compared with our present interpretation. It is unnecessary to say that the remarks are not written for the sake of criticizing the father of conchology in this country. His difficulties were doubtless great with respect to both working up his material and having the articles printed according to his intentions.

Of the introduction and general description, I would refer only to one point or two. Say justly protests against the view then prevalent, that the beaks of a bivalve mark the under side, stating that in the natural position of the mussel they are above. At the same time, what we now regard as anterior and posterior parts, he designates as the right and left sides, evidently from lack of knowledge of the organization of the soft parts. Hence also the terms: "æquilateral and inæquilateral," for which we now must say "equipartite and inequipartite." He calls the distance from the beaks to the opposite or "posterior" margin as length, the one at right angles to it as breadth, as some noted conchologists have done up to recent years. It is interesting to note, however, that soon he approached a more correct conception, even in the same article: in descriptions, *e. g.*, of *Unio ovatus* and *ochraceus*, and *Anodonta marginata*, he speaks of a front and a posterior end, only mistakes them for each other, a view which also has been held tenaciously for a long time by many conchologists. In this way apparent contradictions are

¹ On the History and Distribution of the Fresh-water Mussels, etc. Proc. Cal. Acad. Sciences, Nov. 20, 1882.

² Probably of 1818 or 1819; there is no date, and nothing referring to the time of publication, except that the author mentions his "detached essays in the Journ. Acad. Nat. Sc.," and to the "former editions of this work."